# The Hampden Hippocrat

A Bulletin for the Hampden District of the Massachusetts Medical Society

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## Classics in Medicine

"Alas, poor medical Yoricks," as Shakespeare might be saying, "shall your feeble dissertations, dry as dust, come in the end to stopping bung holes?" And "do you hold it as our statists do, a baseness to write fair?" How far removed you are today from Athens, Milton's 'eye of Greece, mother of arts and eloquence',—from classical Greece where our patron saint, Hippocrates himself furnished perfect examples of clear and forceful locution. (Almost as far removed, indeed, as twentieth century Athenians appear to be, though admittedly with extenuating circumstances, such as avitaminosis and attrition.)

Not that all medical discoursers are mediocre. Every generation can point to at least one exemplar of true eloquence, or an able author of discourses 'characterized', as Webster put its, 'by force and persuasiveness suggesting strong feeling or deep sincerity; discourses marked by apt and fluent diction and imaginative fervor.' The students of Oliver Wendell Holmes beyond a doubt enjoyed such a genius.

The late Frank Holyoke was the last of these fortunates hereabouts. He loved to relate his anecdotes of the eloquent anatomist. Those of us who were privileged to listen to David Cheever's discourse upon the life of Lister some years ago at the Springfield Academy of Medicine, know the meaning of the word. And so do the multitude who recently sat in the same auditorium, at the eloquent—and nimble—fee of Frank Lahey as he unfolded for their comprehension the miracle that thiouracil works in thyrotoxicosis. But the acme of medical eloquence was achieved, at least for this particular segment of the passing generation, by Harvey Cushing in his Oration at the annual meeting of the Massachusetts Medical Association. The memory of that rare experience is still vivid.

Such verdant oases, however, stand out on a drab expense of hackneyed presentations and missed opportunities—due, in large part, to imperfections in preparation or rendition.

Force in the delivery of a speaker is not enough in itself; nor is strong feeling. Both often are employed in unworthy causes or are motivated by prejudice. A choice example of this platitude—though the cause, of course, was not unworthy—came within our ken during a revival meeting conducted by the late lamented Bill Sunday in a large and very crowded tent on the old Huntington avenue circus grounds in Boston. Your Hampden District segment, doubled by the addition of George Dallas Henderson, sought to study the strange phenomenon of revivalism from a bench well up toward the elevated platform. When the rantings of the former ball tosser and echoing hallelujahs had died down, your delegates, herded to the mourners bench, were denied dismissal until they had filled out printed forms of repentance to be mailed the home church for clinching.

They learned about mass hy-

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**Hampden Hippocrat**

"Life is short and art is long, the occasion fleeting, experience fallacious and judgment difficult." —Hippocrates, 430 B.C.

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HAMPDEN DISTRICT MEDICAL SOCIETY
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## EDITORIAL

Thanks to the central double-page spread in the January 1946 issue of the Worcester Medical News, a survey of the individuals who endorsed the Truman national health plan ardently enough to pay for the advertisement became possible. Let us accept the editor's invitation to look over the list to see just who they are.

General Electric's Gerard Swope heads the list. What, one may wonder, will his strike-minded employees think when increasing contributions up to 6% toward compulsory health insurance are withheld from the pay envelopes? Similar questions may agitate the employees of David Sarnoff of the Radio Corporation and of Lessing Rosewald of Sears, Roebuck & Co., and Bernard Gimbel, the big New York department-storer. And what if the workers insist upon passing the whole cost back upon the corporation in their next strike, as is anticipated? The unorganized ultimate consumer will foot the bill, of course. And when inflation pyramids unemployment and stops income generally, who will be left to carry the burden of keeping the public well? The long-suffering practitioner of medicine, as usual, will be found holding the bag! James Roosevelt's name appears,—and of course his mother's but we are surprised to find radio speech-makers Raymond Swing, Cecil Brown, Johannes Steel, Ben Grauer, Leland Stowe, Quincy Howe and William S. Gailfor for once so nearly in agreement.

Finance is represented by Albert Lasker, David Heyman, Fred Stein and Guy Emerson of New York, and politics by Fiorello the Erstwhile with his successor who by now must crave compulsory health insurance for himself against persistent headaches.

The roster includes many artists from Mady Christians, actress, to Hazel Scott of grand piano fame; from Jo Davidson and William Zorach, sculptors, to Thomas Mann and Louis Adamic who paint with their pens, and who both also fled from compulsion in Europe.

President F. D. Patterson of Tuskegee Institute is paired with Roswell G. Ham, President of Mt. Holyoke College. The latter has refused to interfere with his students' participation in picketing, but apparently he has no hesitation in sponsoring dictation to the medical profession in the vital matter of conduct of medical practice.

Caroline Dudley Morgan, Smith White of Cranbury, N. J., Adele Rosewald Levy of N. Y., and Mary Dublin Keyserling of Washington all unattached, also ran.

Lastly we come to the medical sponsors, and firstly of these, to Channing Frothingham of Boston, Knight of the White Cross and the squash racquet, Alice Hamilton of Hadlyme, John Peters and C. E. A. Winslow of New Haven, Ernst Boas and Kingsley Roberts of New York, Thomas Addis of San Francisco, Abel Wolman and Bertram Bernheim of Baltimore, and Allan Butler of the M. G. H. It would be interesting to

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Raleigh Drug Co.
DRUGGISTS
190 State Street Springfield

learn whether or not most of these doctors of medicine are on full-time salaries, or are independently wealthy enough to indulge in day dreams.

Limitations of space—and patience—prelude ennumeration of all the dentists, social workers and others over whose names the endorsement appears, but those of Basil Bibby of Tufts, Bart Bok of Harvard and Jules J. Justin of New York are too alliterative, and Nedwin Smokler, Esquire's of Detroit too improbable to be overlooked.

In the face of a Federal balance sheet that Controller General of the U. S., Lindsay Warren, declared (January 17/46 at Ashville, N. C.,) has reached "such a state as any honest man must call an alarming one, and despite failures in our current planned economy that make the purchase of a white shirt impossible and butter a vanishing essential in the diets of us all, how can intelligent planners ask that the debt of each employed individual in these United States—now roundly $4,000—be increased, as inevitably it must, no matter what circumlocution is offered in denial.

The Controller General declared that the body of citizens at large must show Congress that economy is desired in spite of the paid declarations of pressure groups, or of mistaken individuals. "Everyone" said he, "has an advocate in Washington except the people . . . . should we not have an appraisal of the never-ending succession of new programs imposing large drains upon the Federal Treasury", or are we to "resign ourselves to continuous deficit spending?"

Echo answers, are we?!

## Post Graduate

The second session of lectures held on February 5th under the auspices of the Post-War Planning Committee of the Massachusetts Medical Society was very well received in the Pioneer Valley. Due to confining the Chautauqua tour to one day, the abbreviated itinerary necessitated dropping of the Northampton meeting. Physicians of the Hampshire District were invited to attend whichever of the three meetings was most convenient, Springfield in the morning, Holyoke at three and Greenfield at 8:15 P. M. At least one such was registered at the Holyoke Hospital meeting.

The comments were enthusiastic on all sides, as well they might be. Dr. Maxwell Finland has had years of experience with pneumonias as interne, resident, associate and physician in chief of the Fourth Medical Service at the Thorndyke Memorial Laboratory of the Boston City Hospital. What is more, he not only has the details of diagnosis and the latest methods of treatment thoroughly in mind, but has achieved a clear and convincing manner of imparting information to other minds.

Dr. Louis Weinstein of the Evans and Haynes Memorial Hospitals proved to be equally informative and exceptionally well prepared. In fact, the initial disapponment ot Dr. Charles A. Janeway's inability to attend the meetings was entirely erased by a finished discussion of the various meningitides and their several specific treatments that left nothing to be desired.

The speakers were both patient and generous in answering numerous questions. Furthermore, they seemed

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to be enjoying themselves, though they wished that Spring had not been so far around the corner as they were driven north through the alluvial onion and tobacco fields along the Connecticut river. The Hippocrat is glad to transmit hearty thanks to both doctors for their contributions from us all.

Those who desire mimeographed copies are directed to contact Dr. W. A. R. Chapin at 121 Chestnut Street, Springfield 3, Mass.

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The editors believe that it is appropriate at this time of widespread idleness to publish excerpts from a letter written by a niece of one of our Hampden District practitioners of medicine because of the imminent threat of inflation that may plunge us into the same fix. She was driven out from Belgium at the outset of the war and took refuge in London whence she now writes. In spite of dislocation and privation, the tone of the letter is cheerful in contrast to many comments heard on every side in our own surroundings . . . . 'I have been back twice to Antwerp; once in October 1945 to see my brother and his family. They are all well . . . at that time they all lived in same rooms as their flat was still requisitioned. The second time I went in December to send my furniture over to London. My brother was installed in his own flat then and working full speed in his old job. The life there is improving steadily, food plentiful but at terrific prices, so that any salaried man, be his salary so high, has just enough for food and lodgings only. Clothes are so expensive as to be practically unobtainable. We were lucky to have found most of our furniture. Liliane was called up, but having a diploma from a very fine secretarial college, is given a government job — secretary at the Royal College of Nursing. She likes her work very much though she has to work very hard."

Full speed ahead at hard work seems to be the key to happiness in Belgium. How much better it would be for everyone if the same key were to be employed here in the land of (missed) opportunity.

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## Returnees in Holyoke

Thanks to Dr. Samuel Fox of Holyoke we add these to previously reported doctors returned to his fair city:

Lt. Comdr. Leo J. Bernier, U.S. N.R. Entered service on December 17, 1942. Stationed in Davisville and Williamsburg until September 1, 1943. Foreign service duty in the South Pacific to August 1945. Discharged December 12, 1945.

Lt. Comdr. Edwin M. Mahoney, U. S. N. R. Entered service on February 7, 1943. Stationed at Quonset Point, R. I. Foreign duty—Flight surgeon on the U.S.S. Belleau Wood from November 1943 to Nov. 1944. Saw action in the South Pacific. Stationed at U. S. Naval Hospital at Brunswick, Maine. Discharged Feb. 15, 1946.

Lt. Edward A. Abbott, U. S. N. R. Entered service on November 28, 1942. Stationed at Camp Perry and Chelsea Naval Hospital to February 1944. Foreign duty in England from Feb. 1944 to August 15, 1945. Discharged Sept. 15, 1945.

Major Edmund J. Zielinski, U. S. Army. Entered service on October

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20, 1942. Stationed at Camp Miles Standish and Lovell General Hospital. Discharged Feb. 14, 1946.

Capt. E. C. Harrington, U. S. Army. Entered service Jan. 22, 1943. Stationed at Randolph Field, Texas. Foreign duty Feb. 2, 1944. Invasion of France and Central Germany. Discharged November 23, 1945.

Major George L. Ross, U. S. Army. Entered service February 12, 1943. Stationed at Carlisle. Foreign duty May 11, 1943 to July 25, 1945 in Northern Africa and Italy. Discharged Feb. 1, 1946.

Major Fred H. Allen, Jr. U. S. Army. Entered service Oct. 29, 1942. Stationed at Miami Beach, Bradley Field and Westover Field. Discharged Jan. 28, 1946.

## Classics in Medicine

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teria first hand, it is true, but the enormous expenditure of force and fervor, in the judgment of impartial observers, seems to have been wasted so far as the moral tone of the hot corner of Hampden County is concerned.

Deep sincerity, then, remains as the chief essential to superior discourse, predicated as it is upon knowledge of, and belief in the subject matter under discussion. But the utmost degree of sincerity can be rendered ineffectual by inapt and halting diction, or gelid for the want of warming imagery. This individual segment once upon a time, (before the days of amplification,) made a point of going early to an auditorium in St. Louis to secure a seat up front in order not to miss a word of Honorary President Herbert Hoover's discourse on Child Welfare. In spite of half a continent of effort, the paper proved to be a complete loss when the speaker threw all of his muffled pearls down and back into the manuscript on the lectern. The surprise of the disillusioned auditor therefore was great when, at a later, much more informal meeting in Springfield, (from the vantage point of the front hall stairs of the Colony Club), he enjoyed a persuasive, sincere, uninhibited exposition of the problem of war relief in starving Belgium by the same speaker. The appeal was truly eloquent; and, being completely audible, was fruitful, as some of you remember.

Equally irritating is the speaker who attempts to cover more ground than allotted time permits, when the devil takes not only the hindmost but nearly every last one of the listeners as well. He may finish on time, but his efforts deserve no more commendation than a local draftee received at the end of an obstacle race that featured his Commando training. The sub-ttropical sun blanzed down upon the raw recruits as the final order was given to take to their fox holes for the start. No sooner had the lad from Hampden County disappeared, than out of the hole he zoomed again, beating the gun by several seconds, and was lost to view in a cloud of dust. His officer at length was persuaded to lay off and to take a look for himself. Whereupon he hung a sign on the foxhole, 'Out of Order'. A battalion of snakes, he discovered, had taken over the billet in the absence of foxes and the previous batch of trainees. Sprint-speakers should be served with a similar taboo.

Between the extremes, many lets and hindrances to understanding could be enumerated. It is difficult enough, just in a stuffy room, to focus attention, (no to mention the lantern) upon screened data or diagrams without falling asleep. When the slides are upside down or disordered, or by mischance prove to be the wrong set entirely, the break in thought-transfer is complete.

No, worthy medical discourse is not achieved simply by finding a soap box and turning on whatever juice may

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flow, according to the usage of Hyde Park (Hyde Park, London, that is!) Speakers, to whom the transmission of knowledge is entrusted, whether medical or not, should perfect themselves by precept and practice. They should emulate Demosthenes of Greece, and England's George VI in overcoming imperfections.

Composition and public speaking might well be demanded as pre-medical requirements for the general cultural benefit as well as Hippocratic. At any rate, medical aspirants in the field of public speaking undoubtedly would profit by consulting the precepts laid down for young lawyers by Joseph Story more than a century ago, inconsistent as they may seem,

'Whene'er you speak, remember every cause
Stands not on eloquence, but stands on laws;
Pregnant in matter, in example brief,
Let every sentence stand with bold relief;
On trifling points not time or talents waste,
A sad offence to learning and to taste;
Nor deal with pompous phrase, nor e'er suppose
Poetic flights belong to reasoning prose."

There may be encouragement in the knowledge that Demosthenes himself, whose name through the ages has become a synonym for orator, in the estimation of his contemporaries gained his power and ability in discourse not so much through sheer genius as from an uncommon penchant for work, or his 'infinite capacity for 'taking pains' just as Carlysle did. If Herodotus' word is reliable, the orator himself stated that premeditation in speaking is no more than the exhibition of respect that an audience deserves. When taunted, once by Pytheas that his 'arguments smelt of the lamp', Demosthenes retorted, "It is true, indeed Pytheas, that your lamp and mine are not conscious of the same things."

As for me, regrettably I too may smell midnight oilier than I should!

S. Q. Lapius

* or triticisms like, 'it is interesting to note'!

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## A Good Letter

The following letter is about the best one I have seen on the subject. concisely states the case but it is evidence of a physician taking time out to read the bills before Congress and to intelligently compose this letter for the digestion of our accredited representatives in Washington. Would that more of us wrote to our Senators and Congressmen such letters as this one is! Certainly it will be read by the recipient. Although many readers will suspect who wrote this letter I have not his permission to use his name.

March 9, 1946

The Honorable Leverett Saltonstall
—Walsh and Clason
The Senate Offices
Washington, D. C.
Dear Senator Saltonstall,

I am not given to writing unnecessary letters or bothering busy men with information about which they are better informed than I, but I would point out some facts on a subject in which I feel, perhaps I am better informed than you.

It concerns Compulsory Health Insurance (S1606). About six percent of the people who consult a physician, do so because of a nervous disorder. In every case nervousness or some element of fear is a major consideration. The physician's stock in trade is confidence of the patient. This bond, we in psychiatry, call rapport. Without it, we feel an antagonism and either suggest the patient see another physician or they decide to

discharge us.

With a sense of duty, I have practiced medicine for city, county, state and the Federal Government. I can honestly say that none of these experiences have been satisfactory. Work for private insurance companies is likewise unsatisfactory. Rapport is not there and one feels a triangle has been created. You cannot serve two masters. The patient's angle is that of "something for nothing can't be any good", although under this bill, we can hardly call it 'for nothing".

The bill is intended for the one it will most harm: the poor man, who has abiding faith in his own doctor, the bond sometimes closer than with his religious leader, and in neither case, would he have them Government employees.

Again from a sense of duty, I have carried on for the Veterans Administration during the war, and even now no other psychiatrist wants the job.

Veterans are asking to be treated as private patients and not free of charge by me as a Veterans Administration case. They do not want a third party 'sitting in". Others fail to keep appointments, make visits for pension purposes only, disregard advice and show clearly that if they were paying, they would not be seeing a doctor at all.

The paying of a fee from their own pocket settles all doubt in the doctor's mind, as to the authenticity of symtoms and the desire to cooperate for relief, and wakens in the heart of the physician, in unfortunate cases, a real sense of Christian charity.

Improvement of medical care, as I see it, is best approached by such bills as S191 dealing with Hospital Survey and Construction, and improved standards of living and education. With high wages during the war, the average physician saw patients with relatively trivial ailments. One visit was enough. We refused to see them again, or at least for several weeks. They saved money and abided by our decision. Under Compulsory Health Insurance, they would return—they had paid their taxes and wanted service. They or government officials would see that they got service.

For the destitute, I would enlarge the Public Health Service, not in competition with private practice, but as it now works in state and veterans hospitals.

No Government can give them the best. It can and should give the deserving the second best, but not try to make all medicine second best. Improving the moral and professional standings of all doctors by some supervision will better the best, but all professions are better able to do their own housecleaning.

I am proud of American Medicine as it stands.

Hoping this psychiatric opinion will help you, and with best wishes for the success of your work, I am,

Sincerely yours,

_____ M.D.

## Reprint

Today, March 8th, the Senate Committee on Labor and Education is announcing that the hearings on the Wagner-Murray Bill which were announced to begin on March 18th will begin on Tuesday, April 2nd.

According to the program which the Committee is arranging representatives of the Medical Societies will

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be called about the third of April.

Indications are that many people will want to appear before the Committee both for and against the bill, and it is wise for those who wish to be heard that they make application immediately to Senator J. E. Murray, Senate Office Building, Washington, D. C., for the opportunity to be heard.

Those who may not wish to come to Washington to speak in person may prepare and submit a statement to Senator Murray asking that the statement be included in the report of hearings in the same manner as if it had been delivered in person.

*Council on Medical Service and Public Relations*
Washington Office

## NOTICE

As the reader well knows the Massachusetts Medical Society is doing its part under the sub chairmanship of Dr. Richard Ohler of Boston in presenting in the district where the men live, a discussion of medical and surgical subjects which may be of interest to those who can use such information. We have had two seminars and a third will be held in May. We would like very much to have the members of our Society show enough interest in this Post Graduate course to write to the undersigned, designating what subject would be most acceptable here.

You who were at the last Post Graduate course in Springfield, Holyoke, and Greenfield will remember the subjects were Meningitis and Pneumonia. These were well covered and in the Hampden District one hundred copies have been made of these two subjects as presented. In Springfield a roster was kept of those men who signed the book at the Springfield Hospital and such doctors who attended this meeting will receive a mimeographed copy of the preceding.

W. C.

BACKGROUND

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